A NARRATIVE Of the late PROCEEDINGS Of ſome Juſtices and others.

Pretending to put in execution the late Act againſt Conventieles. Againſt ſeveral peaceable people in and about the Town of *Lewes* in *Suſſex*, only for their being quietly met to worſhip God.

Together

With a brief account of the like proceedings againſt ſome at *Brighthelmſton*, and others at *Chiltington* in the ſame County.

Cui plus licet quam par eſt, plus vult quam licet Sen.

Ecc. 5. 8. *If thou ſeeſt the oppreſſion of the poor, and violent perverting of judgement and Juſtice in a Province. Marvel not at the matter, for he that is higher then the higheſt regardeth and there be higher then they.*

Iſa. 59. 15. *Yea truth faileth and he that departeth from iniquity maketh himſelf a prey, and the Lord ſaw it and it diſpleaſed him that there was no judgement.*

1 Pet. 3. 17. *It is better if the will of God be ſo, that you ſuffer for well doing, then for evil doing.*

Printed in the Year 1670.

A

READER, Thou art here preſented with an account of ſome proceedings, pretended to be grounded upon the late Act againſt Conventicles. Of the Act it ſelf I ſay nothing at all, nor do I call theſe proceedings pretended to be grounded thereon, either arbitrary or illegal, read and be judge thy ſelf. Only be ſure of this that thou haſt a faithful Narrative. What you find therein relating to the conviction of theſe perſons, was reported by ſome Officers then preſent, or dropt from the informers themſelves, and the witneſs of an enemy (we uſe to ſay) is a double teſtimony. That of the unreaſonableneſs of the diſtreſs, &c. will (if occaſion require) be atteſted by many who were both eye and ear witneſſes, for theſe things were not done in a corner. Many material circumſtances are herein for brevity ſake omitted, none but what are upon due examination found true, inſerted. The deſign of this narrative is not to imbitter the ſpirits of any againſt lawful ſuperiors, and I dare be ſo charitable as to judge, that ſuch a deſign would be as contrary to theſe ſufferers themſelves, being Men that are peaceable, and faithfull in the Land. In matters of the Kingdom, malice it ſelf can find nothing wherewith to accuſe them, only in this matter of their God, and when they ſuffered thus the ſpoiling of their goods, they indured it with patience and joyfulneſs. But my end in this relation is for the general information of all; that thoſe who are fellow ſufferers with them in this cauſe, may not think ſtrange of theſe fiery tryals, knowing that the ſame are accompliſhed in their Brethren that are in the world, who are with them filling up that which is behind of the ſufferings of Chriſt, beſides hereby theſe harſh proceedings againſt a peaceable people, may come to the ear of ſome in authority, who may out of pitty to the diſtreſſed, and Juſtice to their righteous cauſe redreſs theſe grievances, and who knows, but that (as Mordecai ſaid of Eſther) Some of them are come to theſe places of truſt for ſuch a time as this. Wiſhing (whoever thou art that readeſt theſe lines) that thou maiſt never meet with the like ſeverity from any, that theſe have done from ſome, I refer thee to the narrative it ſelf, which immediately inſueth.

The Narrative.

ON the 29th of *May*, 1670. (being the Lords Day) ſome Chriſtians in and about *Lewes* in the County of *Suſſex*, (to the number of 500 ſay their Adverſaries) were met together to hear the word of God. And that they might, if poſſible, avoid exaſperating their enemies on one hand, and provide for their own ſecurity on the other, the meeting was appointed at 3 a clock, Afternoon, (by reaſon of the Peoples being at the Publick) an hour of the greateſt privacy. People were appointed to go to a houſe where uſually they met, within a mile of *Lewes*, but from thence were directed to a private By Lane, within a quarter of a mile of the houſe. This may be enough to take of that imputation of contempt of Authority ſo frequently caſt upon them by ſome, and that of raſhneſs as frequently objected by others.

But as Chriſt ſuffered when his hour came, even ſo muſt his Servants expect to do, and how can it be ſuppoſed otherwiſe, for the Diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord, and if theſe things were done to the green tree, how much more to the dry? And if the Captain of our Salvation amongſt but twelve, and the ſelect Diſciples found one treacherous Judas, ſhall thoſe liſted under him think it ſtrange to find two betrayers amongſt 500 common followers, eſpecially conſidering how the price of their betraying exceeds their Maſters. Two perſons there were, one of which (*Relf by Name*) was never obſerved to be at meetings of that kind before, the other (whoſe Name is *Goring*) had been amongſt them only once, before the late Act took place. Theſe were both Inhabitants of *Lewes*, and ſeeing perſons go that way,

followed

followed th m to the place of meeting. It was by ſome vehemently ſuſpected that they might prove Informers, they being perſons very likely enough for ſuch a deſign, ſome therefore took occaſion to queſtion with both of them about it; who ſtoutly denyed that they came out of any ſuch intent. *Relf* was obſerved to give very diligent attention, and when he came home, co mended it for the moſt excellent Sermon he ever heard in all his Life.

But the next day, or before, theſe treacherous Judaſes, either vo'untarily went to Sir *Thomas Nut* a Juſtice in *Lewes*, or (as it is rather probable) were ſent for by him and threatned on one hand that, if they would not turn accuſers he would make the County of *Suſſex* too hot for them; but, if they would, he promiſed on the other hand, that it ſhould be worth them at leaſt five pound a Man; And now theſe fellows (being *Balaam like* as willing to receive, as this Juſtice (if it be no injury to call him ſo) is *Balak-like* ready to give the wages of unrighteouſneſs) ſtand ready preſt for their ſervice. Yet one obſtacle there ſtands in the way; *Relf* having had no long acquaintance in *Lewes*, knows not above ſeven of the hearers, and ſo can ſwear againſt no more, yet at laſt this ſlick ſtring is ſcrewed up to an harmony with the other, or at leaſt this expedient is found, both of them ſwear Liturgy, and practice of the Church of *England*, and then *Gorings* ſingle oath againſt ſingle perſons is judged a ſufficient ground for their conviction. For *Relfs* part he hath ſince, in the hearing of many, oftentimes ſaid that he knew not the Miniſter, and but ſeven of the hearers, and had not ſworn againſt them neither, but that he was forced by the Juſtice, as any one elſe (ſaid he) might have been.

Upon this Sir *Thomas Nut*, with three other Juſtices whom he had drawn into a complyance with him, convict the Miniſter, with above 40 hearers, without ſending for them, and hearing what they had to offer in their own defence, that there were no more of them ſerved thus, moſt impute it to the want of mem ory, not mallice These hearers were fined five ſhillings a peice, beſides which the Miniſters fine of 20 pounds is layd upon five of them, viz. On *Walter Bret*; Grocer in *Lewes*, *Thomas Barnard, and Richard Barnard*, Draper, five pound a piece, on *Richard White* Braſier, *and John Tabret*, Carrier of the *Cliff near Lewes*, each of them fifty ſhillings.

Further, Whereas they concluded ſixteen of the hearers inſufficient, they laid their fines being four pound on four others, moſt of whom were

the

the perſons upon whom they had laid the Miniſters fine, viz. On *Walter Bret, and Thomas Barnard*, 20 ſhillings a piece, which with their 5 pound for the Miniſter, and 5 ſhillings for themſelves, made the ſum total, of each of their fines 6 pound 5 ſhillings, 20 ſhillings they laid on *Richard VVhite*, which with 50 ſhillings for the Miniſter, and 5 ſhillings for himſelf, made his fine 3 pound 15 ſhillings; the other 20 ſhillings was laid on *Thomas Ridg of the Cliff*, Draper, which with 10 ſhillings for him and his Wife, made his fine 30 ſhillings. Theſe were the extraordinary fines, whereof the higheſt was 6 pound 5 ſhillings, other there were downwards of all ſizes. The Fine for the place being a common way was clear ſaved.

It is very obſerveable, that thoſe who lived fartheſt from Sir *Thomas Nut* ſped never the worſe, the higheſt fines being impoſed on his neareſt Neighbours, whilſt the cauſe ſtood on its tryal, many both falſe, and malitious inſinuations were ſuggeſted to the Juſtices to exaſperate them againſt the parties accuſed, which would have been eaſily wiped off, if the Judges when they had lent one ear to their accuſors, had referred the other for them. but Juſtice inſtead of weighing their cauſe in her ballance, immediately fell to make uſe of her Sword.

The conviction thus paſt, Warrants under the Hands and Seals of the ſaid Juſtices, are immediately iſſued out, for the recovery of the ſaid fines by diſtreſs and ſale of Goods, which Warrants were directed to the Conſtable of the hundred of *Ringmire*, and the Church-wardens, and Overſeers of the Pariſh of *Mauling*, for in *Mauling* Pariſh within the hundred of *Ringmire*, the meeting was. After one of the Warrants, and beneath the Hands and Seals of the Juſtices, was written as a Poſtſcript ſome what to this purpoſe. *That all other Officers what ever were required within their Libertyes, to aſſiſt the ſaid Officers in making the Diſtreſs.*

Sir *Thomas Nut* ſends out theſe Warrants by his Clerk, who carrying them to the Headborough of *Ringmire* told him; That Sir *Thomas* had ſent him thoſe Warrants, and that if he knew any others that had been at the meeting, he muſt put in their Names and levy 5 ſhillings a piece of them, the Headborough telling him he was at Church, and ſo knew not who was at the meeting, the other replyed, that if he heard of any that were there he ſhould put them in.

The Conſtable declared to one of the Juſtices that he would rather to forfeit his 5 pound then act, the Juſtice told him he was only to go with

with them, and see the Peace kept, it was the other were to distrain which he did accordingly, but would not meddle in the distress.

Charles Buckland the Church-warden of *Mauling*, or if you will that *Mauling* Church-warden, was every way qualified for this work, one of a very hot and fiery disposition, and withall sufficiently, though causelessly, prejudiced both against the persons, and cause against which he is now ingaged.

Besides *Relf* the Informer, who is to have a share of the fines, is *Bucklands* wives brother, and which we may add to the rest, the Law not obliging how to return any overplus, he hopes hereby to furnish himself with Money a commodity which he sometimes wants.

The Overseer of *Mauling*, that is in the Warrant joyned with him is a person not overmuch read, nor practiced in politicks, more apt to confide in the Counsel of others, then trust to his own. It is at this time his unhappiness that the Oracle he consults is a Justice whose hand is to the warrants. It is judged he ingageth in this design, not so much on desire to be medling with other mens Estates, as to secure his own, he being threatned to be fined in case of neglect.

These two being coupled together, the one drawn by his love to the work, and wages, the other driven by fear, quickly after they receive the warrant, set upon the execution of it. On the first of *June* they begin in the *Cliff*, a Parish adjoyning to *Lewes*, they first set upon *John Prior*, where for 10 *s.* for his with his wives fine, they took four cheeses out of his shop, which when they carried away, he told them. *He never sold any thing for so great advantage, for this would bring him in an hundred fold.* Within few days after Sir *Thomas* sends a warrant for this poor man, to bind him to the good behavior, for bidding *Goring*, one of the Informers, *repent of being such a Judas, and warning him of the judgement to come*; he was excused from being bound, but forced by Sir *Thomas* to pay 2 *s.* for the warrant.

One *Battlemer* who informed against a meeting at *Ditchling* 9 miles from *Lewes*, being since apprehended for Felony, [viz. (as I think) for robbing of Fish-ponds] declared to some, asking him of his late informations, that he knew not what he swear, but he put his hand upon the book and swear what the Justice would have him. This Justice was not Sir *T. N.*

But this which follows is true of Sir *Thomas* himself, *Goring* going to Mr. *Spence* with a complaint against the Churchwarden in the Cliff, and he

he not giving the Informer what incouragement he expected, the said *Gerint* is reported to cast it in his teeth how much more active he would have been in former times (these Gentlemen bring up cubs that will pick out their own eyes) at which displeased in anger turned him off, who going to Sir *Thomas Nut*, procured him a Warrant from him to this effect, viz. That whereas oath was made to him by two witnesses that *James Emroy* a Church-warden of the *Cliff*, had wittingly and willingly permitted a Meeting within his Parish at the house of *Mary Agnott*. Therefore the Officers to whom the warrant was directed must levy 5 *l.* on the said *Emroy*'s Goods, which they must speedily sell and return the Money to Sir *Thomas*.

The Constable receiving the warrant unwilling to execute it, went to Sir *Thomas* his Clark, telling him that *Emroy* was not at home when the said Meeting was, and so could not permit it wittingly or willingly, and hoped that Sir *Thomas* would pass it by; the Clark replyed that he was confident the Informers were never sworn, (though the warrant were granted and in specified that they were) and he did believe that Sir *Thomas* might be prevailed with to remit it, which by the mediation of some friends he was pleased to do.

Next to *John Prior*, they proceed to his Neighbour *Thomas Ridge*, a Draper, where they took as much goods out of his Shop for 30 shillings fine, as amounted to about 50 shillings. (to use his own expression, he parted as willingly with it, as with any goods he ever sold. They went to *Richard White* Brasier, the same day, but did not distrayn at that time. This was the chief of that days work, which like Church work, goes on but slowly. They thought to have lodged their spoil at the sign of the *Cat* in the *Cliff*, but the master of the house, (though no Fanatick) said he would let no such goods come within his doors, which made them take up quarters at another place.

Glutted with that dayes prey, they for a time lay Dormant. The tenth day of *June* they went where fines were laid, and made a demand of them. This days work turned to little account.

Some thought they would meddle no more, but being already over the shoes, they resolve to venture over the boots too, on the 17 of *June* they came with a full carreere, and having halted so long, fall on now the more eagerly. They begin where they last left off, and distrained from *Richard White* aforesaid, as many Brass Kettles as (with a Still they took, after they acknowledged themselves satisfied with the other) were worth

ten pound thirteen shillings, though his fine were but three pound fifteen shillings, indeed he needeth good store of Brass that shall take such a peice of work in hand.

They now approach the Town of *Lewes*, the Constable and Headboroughs of that Burrough assisting them but a far greater Number of Children gazing, and wondring after them, From *Richard Thomas* a Butcher they take his weights for five shillings.

They approach the house of *Edward Hinly* a Shoe-maker: and though they saw five pair of shoes hanging out of his stall worth double his fine, yet they fall a breaking open his door, which they split in sunder, and had one blow been given more, they had made the lock fly, but at length they better bethought themselves and took the other shoes without entring, his fine was five shillings.

From *Samuel Cruttenden* a Haberdasher, they took three hats worth fifteen shillings, for five shillings his fine. From *Thomas Elphick* a Shoemaker (the Constable of *Lewes* first unbolting his door, and then entring his Shop, they took three pair of shoes worth nine shillings, for five shillings his fine.

At *Richard Benets* a Taylor, they stoutly battered his door till opened to them within side, there for his and his wives fine being ten shillings, they took goods of several sorts, such as the Kitchin would afford,

At *Edward Whiskets* a Victualler, they took goods to a considerable value, some of his own, and some of anothers that was laid in there, for five shillings his fine.

At *Nicholas Grisbrooks* a Black smith, they brake open his doors, and now the Poor man can no longer save his Bacon, they take amongst other things, a good part of a Flitch, one would not think they wanted a Rasher, that saw how rashly they acted. Thus ended this days distress.

June the 20. *John Tabret* of the *Cliff*, for fifty five shillings fine, hath a Cow distrayned from him, at a Farm he useth within *Mauling* Parish, that Night the Cow returned, but was quickly sent for by them that first took her. This is the only distress the Officers made in their own Parish.

The next day being *June* the 21 they visit *Lewes* again, if I mistake not it was this day that they took from *William Humphry* a Barber Chyrurgion, a fair seeing Glass of a considerable value, with other things belonging to his imployment.

Entring

Entring the house of *Benjamin Wood*, a Mason, they refuse what the Kitchen would afford, and take to the Chamber where (not but that there were other things) they took a pair of sheets out of the bed, and four new shirts, the woman of the house seeing what havock they made gave them the 5 *s.* for which they distrained.

They had been with *John Knappe* a Barber the time before, he then put them off with this, that his name was not in the Warrant, it being *Nappe*, to which the Headborough of *Lewes* replyed that if it were not his Name he could take the warrant and make it so. They now for 5 *s.* his fine, distrayned what they could find in his shop, he desired them amongst the rest to take Mr. *Dods* sayings which were by, but them they refuse, knowing be like, that they propheeyed no good to them.

At *Henry Owdem* a Carpenter, for 5 *s.* they discharged him of a good Musquet, besides which they took a Jack worth 10 *s.*

I think it was the same day that these with the Officers of *Lewes* distrayned for 5 *s.* a horse of *Thomas Towl's* a Butcher, they took him out of the burrough of *Lewes*, and yet the Officers of *Lewes* brake open the Gate belonging to the field in which he was, the gate being lockt, though the party distrayned had goods within the burrough more meet for such a distress. From *Richard Mantle* they took a horse for the like fine.

They now begin to distrayn those on whom the highest fines were set, it seems it was their lot, though to be first set yet last served. This 21 of *June*, they come to distrain *Walter Brett* Grocer for 6 *l.* 5 *s.* being his fine, the hatch of his shop they found bolted, and entrance denyed them, unless they would give him a copy of their warrant, which they denyed. The Constable of *Lewes* puts over his hand and unbolts the door, at first they were perplexed to say, they saw nothing there worth the fine, yet they found about 2 Cwt. Currants worth 20 *l.* which proved too mighty for them and their assistants to remove, the Constable being a Grocer, told them that some Sugar standing by would be enough (he might have said too much) to satisfie the fine, for they took in 2 barrels as much as cost 15 *l.* odd Money.

Two days after, being the 23 of *June* these *Mauling* Officers rally their forces consisting of *Neif* the informer, 2 brother of *Gorings* the Informant, and another who (incouraged by Sir *Thomas Nut*) is newly entred on that employment, to which the Constable and Headborough of that hundred, within which *Northouse* Farm in the Parish of *Radmel'ton*,

being added, they intend to make a distress there for 11 *l.* 10 *s.* being the fines imposed on *Thomas and Richard Barnard* of *Lewes*. The distressors pretend that these brothers were with their mother partners in the stock, and the goods by partnership distraynable. It was offered to be made appear that *Thomas* upon whom 6 *l.* 5 *s.* of the fine was laid had no propriety in the stock for above three years past, but it seems they think it a good reason that his Mother (though not at the Meeting) should pays for him, as that he should pay for others, besides when these things were questioned to Sir *Thomas Nut* he bid them distrain however, for, said he, come the worst, they can but appeal to us, the distressors comfort themselves also with this that how illegally so ever they act, persons can but appeal to the Sessions, and they have 4 of the Justices hand to their warrant already. Sir *Thomas* told one whilst this distress was in levying that if he pleased he would levy their fines upon him, and how would he help himself, though the party were not at the Meeting.

Before these Blades could make up their full company, the Oxen (which *Buckland* had especially threatned) were by the servants belonging to the farm, lockt up. When the Constable came, *Buckland* commands him to break the door, the Constable demanded of him a warrant to impower him to do it. Many sore strains *Buckland* himself gave the door, but finding himself prevented here, in a fume he steers his course another way, threatning that he would take the whole herd of about 20 Cows, upon which the Dairy maid is said, to tell him that then she believed they would have store of *Sillibubs* having gotten so much Sugar from *Mr. Bret*. The Bars where the Cows were, being lockt, the Constable durst not break them open, at least not without a warrant, *Buckland* took his old warrant out of his pocket, and (purposely misreading it) would have made the Constable believe, that he was included in the warrant and producing the Act (at the rate he read it) made as if that clause (impowring for the breaking open of a house in order to the taking of a Meeting) had impowred him to break open upon a distress, moreover *Buckland* offered him his word if not his bond to bear him harmless, but his word and bond were both of like value in the Constables account, who willing to have better security for what he did, immediately went to the Justices concerned in the Conviction, desiring a special warrant to break open, if he must do it. Two of them civilly told him they should give out no other warrant. Sir *Thomas Nut* could say more then both the other, he tells him that the Constables of *Lewes* had broke open

doors

doors, and so might he as well, a further warrant be denyed him, but threatned immediately to fine him, if he did not assist them in the distress.

They were from 8 in the Morning till nigh two in the afternoon, before they made their distress, some intervals of time offered its self for discourse, between the distressors, and those whom they were to distrain, who like lousers took leave to speak. The Informer who heard the Sermon, being urged could not deny but it was the Gospel which was preacht, upon which these sufferers took leave to infer, *that then their sufferings were for the Gospels sake.* *Buckland*, amongst other things, being seriously minded of the great day of account, said, *they were not to be affrighted with great words*, and scoffingly said, *if you suffer for well doing, you may suffer joyfully*: to which the other replyed, *that they would keep their goods as long as they could, and yet then part with them joyfully too.* *Buckland* sent to *Lewes* (being about 2 mile) to inform Sir *Thomas Nut*, that there was such a company there, that he dare hardly to do his Office, upon which Sir *Thomas* was heard to say that he would make a Riot of it, and that it should cost the two *Barvards* a 100 *l.* a Man. It seems there were present most of the Servants (few else) and these only to be witnesses of what was done, the best armed amongst them, has only an Oxe-goad, which was he that drave the Oxen, it seems *Buckland* esteemed him a second *Shamgar*, *&c.* *What shall be given thee, or what shall be done unto thee thou false tongue.*

The Constable returns in a great perplexity, if he break the door he lays him self open to an action from the owners, if he do not Sir *Thomas* threatens that he shall be fined, who in such cases useth not to be worse then his word. The Constable chose rather (though importunately desired by *Buckland*) to break open the bars for Cows, then the Barn for Oxen. They took 6 Cows, 3 of which indifferently sold, would more then countervail their fines. One of the partyes distrayned, told them he wondred that men skilled in the worth of Cattle, should make such an unreasonable distress. *Buckland* reply'd, but we take one for your peremptoriness, and another for our pains. Some of their own gang report, that the distrayners will get above 10 *l.* a peice by the bargain, no wonder the wheels run so fast when all of them must be so well greased. At their parting one of the parties distrayned told them he hoped they owned Scripture, desired them to consider a place he should recommend to them.

So

So soon as ever *Buckland* heard him talk of Scripture, he replyed, *that is for you to mind, look you there*, the other applyed himself to them still, telling them he would recommend a place, which they might take to themselves without straining, the Scripture he recommended to them was that in *Jer.* 17. 11. *As a Partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a Fool.* There was severally by both the persons distrayned, demands made of a Copy of the Warrant, which the other refused to give them, they then demanded the sight of it, which was likewise denyed.

Before this time they would have distrayned from *William Ridge* of *Ford*, an Ox for 5*s*. being therein disappointed they did distrayn a horse, which they left in his possession, till several days after, they came and took him away.

Thus their distrayning was at an end, many found themselves aggrieved, but of an appeal none durst venture the hazard.

How ever they that dare not appeal to Men on Earth; may enter their appeal in a higher Court: The Judge of all the whole Earth, will do righteously.

The 6 Kine aforesaid were driven to *Buckland*, who had some Land he hired, that wanted stock, the next *Saturday* seven night, being the 2*nd of July*, these with the Cow taken from *John Tabret* were brought to *Lewes* Market, and placed just before Sir *Thomas Nuts* door. It being quickly known upon what account they were taken, they had many spectators, but few chapmen, probably they had lyen in their hands. but that there being at Sir *Thomas Nuts* an own brother of his he becomes the purchaser, buyeth the seven Cows, for what is not certainly known, for 14*l*. 5*s*. say they that report the highest. though they were not ill worth 27*l*. having no ground of his own, he first sends them, and then selleth them, to one that is Tenant to Sir *Thomas*.

It was stranged by some, why Sir *Thomas* should beyond others bestir himself to procure them distrayned, but now that Riddle may be easily read, his brother is to have the first purchase of them, and his Tenant the second. The same day sale was cryed in the Market to be held at the *Star* in *Lewes*, the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday following, for the rest of the goods, where they sold cheap, I cannot say good pennyworths.

These

These sufferers are very chearful reckoning themselves (if in worldly goods poorer) yet that promise richer, *Mark* 10. 29. 39. *And Jesus answered and said, &c.*

The same day with that at *Lewes*, there was a Meeting at the Town of *Brighthelmstone*, some 6 miles off. To take away all occasion of offence, they did lessen their number and alter their place of meeting but were beset by Captain *Tetterſol* Constable of the place, and his Gang, finding the door shut that they could not enter, they surrounded the house that none of the Meeters might come out, thus they kept them prisoners till they sent to *Lewes* to Sir *Thomas Nut* for a warrant to break open the door, when the warrant came entrance was given, thay find no Minister, nor were the people when they came in about any Religious exercise. They pretended they had heard the sound of a voice, which they please to say is preaching these men going to Sir *Thomas Nut*, and making some deposition upon oath, a warrant is issued out to bring the Meeters before him and some other Justices.

When they came the business was to pump something by way of confession out of them. in which if they would be ingenious, a promise is made that they should set their own fines, but these, keeping their own counsel, the Justices not being able to convict them by the parties confession, are forced to do it, by that notorious evidence before specified. They fine *William Beard* Master of the house, where the Meeting was 20 pound, *Tetterſol* breaks open locks to come at Malt, being gotten to the heap, filleth without all measure sixty of five bushel sacks, which he hath sold to one of his gang for 12 *s.* per quarter. One that went out of the house where the Meeting was, just as the disturbers were coming to it, is notwithstanding convicted.

At *Chilsington* 3 miles from *Lewes*, One *Nicholas Martin* was upon slight evidence convicted by Sir *Thomas Nut*, for having a Meeting at his house, and fined 20 pound for which they drave his Land, and took from him 6 Cows, 2 young bullocks, and a horse, being all the stock he had these were returned to him again upon his entring an appeal, but being strangely cast at the Sessions he was by the court fined 60 pound, which was at last remitted to 23 *l.* for nonpayment whereof, he was committed to the Jaylors hands. Nor could he be released though one *Salisbury* Vicar of the place, though his grand persecutor being convinced he had

dealt

dealt injuriously with him, offered to give bond to pay the whole fine, within a quarter of a year.

Many more things of the like Nature might be Related, but should these Lines of mine swell as big as the malice of others, what is intended for a brief Narrative, would amount to a vast Volumn.

POST-SCRIPT.

IT cannot but be a matter of grief to all sober persons, to see a company of honest, peaceable and industrious people thus made a sacrafice to the great malice of some, and greedy covetousness of others. How full fraught with malice that Gentleman is, who is their grand persecutor, the whole current of his proceedings against them sufficiently declares.

For the informers they are a company of men (if one may call them men) not worth our describing, persons who like the unjust Steward cannot dig, and to beg they are ashamed, and therefore fit to live like the drone, upon the substance that the industrious Bee hath gathered. If we speak of their behaviour, they are very sons of *Belial*, and since they can have at once such countenance, and maintenance, they are commenced graduats in wickedness.

It

It is wonderful to think how Sir *Thomas Nyn* debaseth himself in associating with such base fellows, whom a Man would disdain to sit with the dogs of his flock. He hath taken one as a servant into his house, meerly for his being seryicable in this kind. Another takes his diet there when he pleaseth, making Sir *Thomas* his house his home, but that he lodgeth elsewhere; the manner of whose inauguration into his Office was as followeth, being Journeyman to a Glover, a poor Man, and conceived by some to be rather a burthen, then benefit to him, they get his Master to turn him off: The next Saturday night, he gives out threatnings of no very handsome Nature, saying it would never be well till the Fanaticks here were served as those had been at *London*, and that he for his part could fire such and such houses, naming the houses of those who had made his Masters house too hot for him, and further said that he would be revenged upon them, saying moreover that since he was out of his other imployment he would now turn Informer. This latter he made good the next day being very industrious in indeavouring to discover Meetings. Notwithstanding all this Sir *Thomas* said he will keep him there though at his own charge in spite of them all. A Neighbour to the house where this fellow lodgeth having since his coming thither lost several things, makes complaint thereof to Sir *Thomas*, telling him, he knew this fellow had saved no Money, and could not live being out of employment. (for though he have his Meat with Sir *Thomas* he buys store of drink elsewhere.) In vain is the complaint made, it is supposed (belike) that the more Rogue he is, the better Informer he will make. Thus Sir *Thomas* (having 2 Informers in his house, himself being ready to convict, and his brother to buy the distrayned goods) may drive on a Trade by himself.

It is a strange favour Sir *Thomas* shewed to *Goring* another Informer, This rude fellow picking a quarrel with a poor woman as she was selling of Milk, falls upon her in the open street sheds her milk, and catching her by the throat was ready to have strangled her, but that some neighbors came into her rescue. She goes to a Justice of the peace, deposits upon oath, that she went in fear of her Life. The Justice immediately issues out a warrant for *Goring*; who chooseth to go before his good friend Sir *Thomas* he instead of taking bonds for his peaceable behaviour, sends to the Headborough to give in the warrant, which he not daring to do, Sir *Thomas* sends to *Holwey* the Constable, who is reported to take the warrant from his Headborough, and give it Sir *Thomas*, and now the

poor woman (it being alledged that she had called the other informing Rogue) had been sent to the house of Correction, had not a Gentlewoman interceeded for her. It may be Sir *Thomas* thought being shut up there, she would be as safe as if the other had been bound.

I cannot but take leave here to insert a brief Relation of some further sufferings which like a black cloud seemeth to hang over the heads of many of those peaceable people before mentioned. Their adversaryes not thinking that sufficient which they have done, resolve to proceed against them in another way.

John Holney Apothecary, and Thomas Harrison Grocer, Constables of the burrough of *Lewes* take to an account of six score and 12 persons within their liberties, whom they present at the assize held at *Horsham*, Thursday the 14*th* of *July* last, for not going to Church, among all which there is not one of these many presented, who tarry at home out of meer prophaneness, nor so much as ONE PAPIST.

Sir *Thomas Nut* having got a list of the Names gave in to the Judge before the other presented.

The Constables having met with some good Liquor by the way, came in somewhat the merrier, but much the later. Getting to a Tobacconists shop, *Holney* fall out with a Gentleman, for being such a pittiful son of the Church. The Gentleman returning some unpleasing answer, first *Holney*, and afterward *Harrison* draw their swords. Thus a son is like to be lost, whilst they quarrel for their Mother, the abused Gentleman being unarmed, chuseth rather to try that by the Gown, which the other would have decided by the sword, intending to prefer a bill against them.

The next morning these Constables give in their presentments, having dispatched their work, (and done others work to as they suppose) as they came, so they returned drunk. *Holney* falls so desperately from his horse, that with his fall the blood gushed out of his mouth and Ears. His companion is fain to send for a Physitian and Chyrurgion, being gotten in better plight fair and softly they got home on *Monday* night. The Lord grant that (*his hand being not only lift up, but set down upon them*) *they may see and be ashamed for their envy at his people.*

One would think of all men that these might forbear to trouble their Neighbours in this unhandsome manner. One of them, *viz. Harrison* being more active in the late times, then all those he now persecutes put them

them together having ſerved againſt his Majeſty both by Sea and Land; beſides theſe are greater *Nonconformiſts* to all Laws of ſobriety and humanity, then thoſe whom they thus perſecute are to the Laws Eccleſiaſtick. It was thought by ſome that the unſucceſsfulneſs of their journey would make them aſhamed to ſhew their faces, but no ſuch mater, one of them at *Lewes* without all ſhame (a little before his being made Conſtable) ſhewed more then his face, for in one of his moods, he appeared in the day time ſtark naked in view of all the ſtreet.

It was but the 14 of *May* laſt, being a Market day, that *Holney* the other Conſtable was drunk about noon and ſteering his courſe homeward the back way, he fell a conſiderable way down a ſteep bank, to the indangering of his Neck. Being holpen by 2 men in his way homeward he meeting with a Woman (as far from Nonconformity as himſelf) called her Fanatick Whore, commanding thoſe with him to knock her on the head in the Kings Name and falling upon her himſelf handled her ſo ſorely, that ſhe ſpit blood; beſides many outward bruiſes which he gave her. Yet theſe are the Men that muſt perſecute theſe poor innocent perſons for not coming up to his Majeſties Laws in ſome ſmaller punctilios, whilſt they themſelves are highly diſobedient to the Laws both of GOD and the KING, and ſhew it in the face of the Country, at ſuch a time, when they are in the heat of their perſecution againſt the other.

When they came home, *Harriſon* returning his horſe to the owner, had him flung into his hands again, it being the wrong horſe, and which makes his miſtake the more inexcuſeable, this had a long ſlick tayl, whereas the other had not. The next day he ſends a meſſenger to make inquiry about it, he could not tell the meſſenger at what place he had been beſides *Horſham*, ſending him to *Holney* he cou'd tell no more then the other.

Harriſon that while he was at the Aſſizes drew his Sword upon one that is an Officer belonging to the Exciſe, and ſaying that he was ſworn to kill the Exciſe-men; made a paſs at him, which the other ſeaſonably put by, but will not put up the affront, but hath returned him into the Crown Court and is not yet prevailed with to compound it.

This *Harriſon* hath lately had ſome ſhort ſickneſs upon him; which he dreaded would prove a greater fit, being not well in his ſhop, *July* the 30 being Market-day he paſſionately ſaid (in the hearing of one from whom I had it.) That he had diſobliged others, and done all this to pleaſe them and now was but ſlighted for his pains. For if Sir *T. N.*

crime by he would hardly ſpeak to him, or ſo much as look upon him.

How much more of this nature might be ſaid, but I ſhall proceed no further on a ſubject ſo unpleaſing, being ſorry their inhumane carriage gives occaſion to ſay ſo much. For their perſons I rather pitty, then envy them; and for their actions they ſhall be the ſubject of my grief, not joy. The worſt I wiſh them is that whilſt ſpace is given them they may repent, leaſt their Lord come in a day they look not for him, and in an hour they are not aware, and finding them ſmiting their fellow ſervants; and eating and drinking with the drunken) he cut them aſunder and, give them their portion with Hypocrites, where is weeping, and wayling, and gnaſhing of teeth.

The Lord haſten theſe days of affliction to a period, by which, for the moſt part, only a few perſons, (except for their wickedneſs) every way in conſiderable are gratified, but will elſe moſt aſſuredly end, in the great wounding of Religion of many an induſtrious, and innocent, perſon and family, and the great diſhonour and detriment of the KINGDOM *it ſelf.*

FINIS

F-14F417

N194a